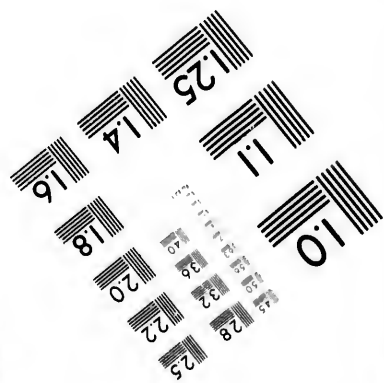
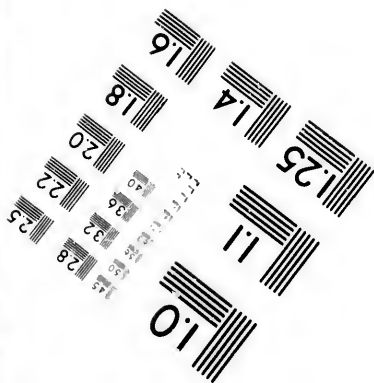
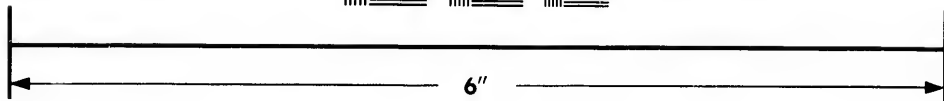
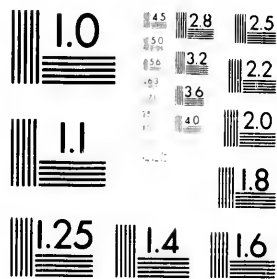


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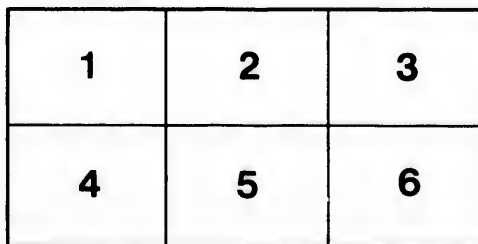
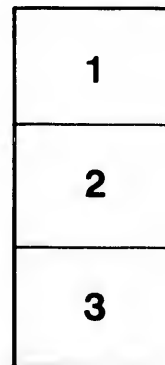
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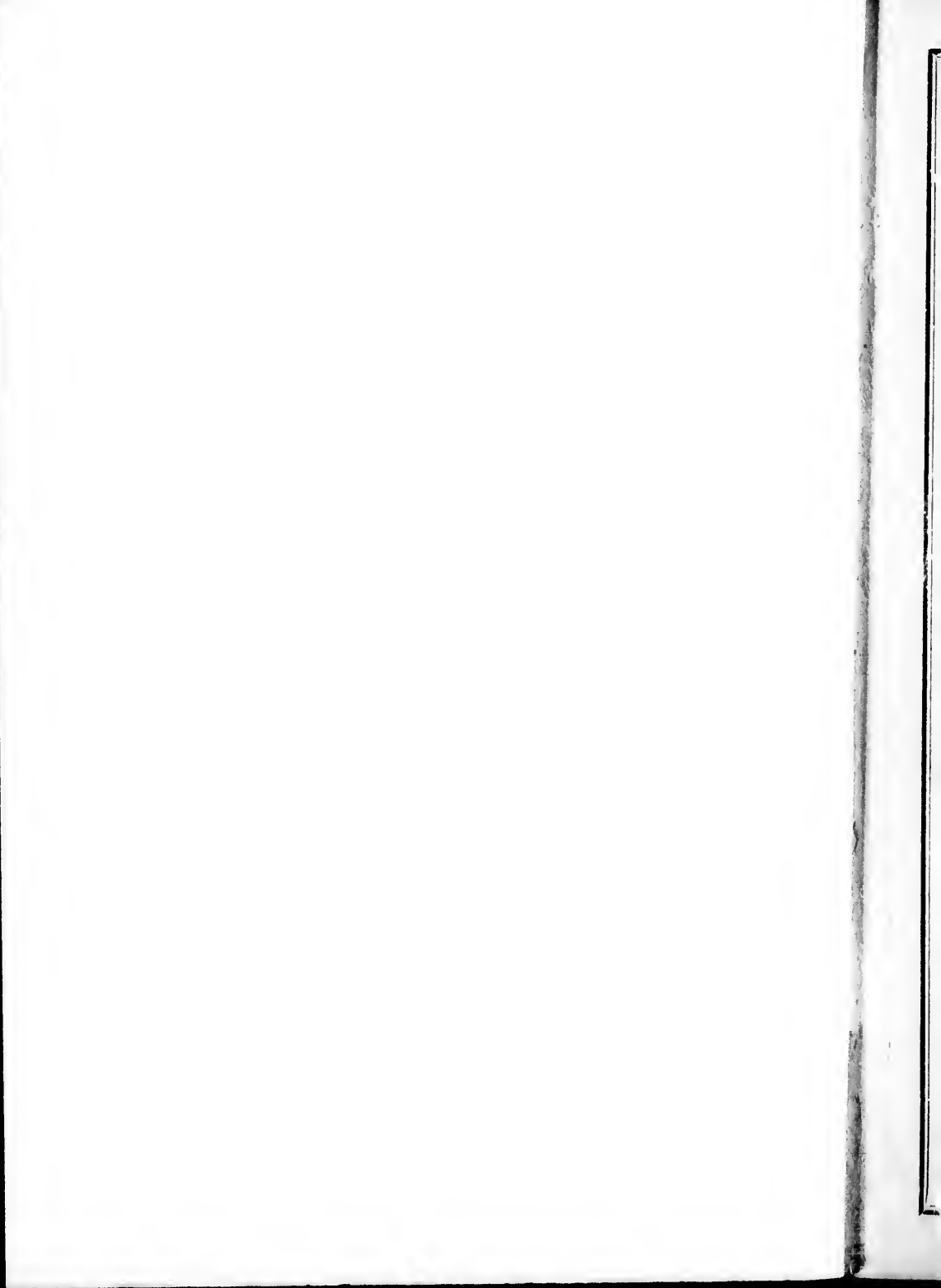
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SKETCH OF THE LIFE
OF
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL,
AND
ORIGIN OF THE SOCIETY
OF THE SAME NAME.



TORONTO:
PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL, AT THE
"IRISH CANADIAN" OFFICE, 16 KING ST. EAST.
1884.

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SKETCH OF THE LIFE

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ST. VINCENT DE PAUL, THE MODERN APOSTLE OF CHARITY.

(FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.)

Many have heard of St. Vincent de Paul, but few perhaps have any idea of the magnitude of his claim to the gratitude and reverence of mankind. A brief and very imperfect outline of a life of eighty-five years spent in the constant exercise of every virtue which can adorn humanity may not be without interest. Vincent was the son of a peasant; he was born at Pouy, in the south of France, in 1576; his early years were spent in caring for the cattle on his father's farm. As he grew up he manifested a capacity for learning, and was placed in a small grammar school in a friars' convent. His studies were continued at Toulouse and Saragossa. To obtain the means to finish his education he opened a school in the neighborhood of Toulouse, and completed his course in the university of that city. He was ordained priest in 1600. A few years later, while on the Mediterranean, he was taken prisoner by African pirates and carried to Barbary, where he was sold to a fisherman and then to a physician, who took a great fancy to him, and did his best to convert him to Mohammedanism. On the death of the physician, Vincent was again sold to a renegade Christian, a quasi Mormon, who had three wives, one of whom, a Turkish woman, went often to the field where Vincent was working and asked him to sing pious songs for her edification. She was much impressed by his saintly demeanor, and reproached her husband so vehemently for his base apostacy, that the

latter finally repented, and making his escape with Vincent, landed near Marseilles in 1607.

After a short visit to Rome, Vincent went to Paris, and was appointed to a small parish near that city; he soon wrought such a reformation that a learned divine visiting the place during Vincent's temporary absence, testified that the people led the lives of angels, and that when preaching to them he felt he was carrying light to the sun. Soon afterward Vincent was induced to undertake the education of the sons of the Count de Joigny, general of the galleys of France. The duties of this office frequently carried the Count to Marseilles, and Vincent, who generally accompanied him, had thus opportunities of seeing the dreadful condition of the galley slaves. In those days slaves or captives were often employed to work the oars of ships, and it frequently happened that in a sea fight the natives of one country worked the ship of war of her enemy, as was the case at Lepanto, where the Turkish ships were generally worked by Christians, and the Christian ships by Turks. These ships were actually prisons; the miserable beings confined in them were chained to benches, and when not working at the oars, were perfectly idle; their treatment was brutal, their food scanty and bad, the air they breathed pestilential, and no attention was given to the sick or dying. To relieve them was a duty, but the question was how could they be relieved; generally speaking, the law which condemned them was just and its provisions humane, but its administration was most inhuman and its victims without practical means of redress. Vincent began his charitable work by announcing to them his friendly intentions; having gained their confidence he made their condition known to the higher clergy; large subscriptions were raised and their disposal entrusted to him; the king applauded the work and conferred on Vincent the title of Almoner-General of the French Galleys. The galley service was gradually abandoned, and finally commuted for labor at the national works, where prisoners were protected by the

public eye from undue oppression. Before the abolition of the slave trade this was probably the noblest triumph obtained in the cause of suffering humanity.

An interesting episode in the life of Vincent at this time deserves notice. On one occasion he observed among the convicts a young man driven almost to madness by the reflection that his family, during his captivity, would be deprived of the means of subsistence. Vincent was so affected by the sight of this man's misery, that, being unable otherwise to relieve him, he managed to take his place, bore the chain and worked in the galley service unnoticed and unknown, till after the lapse of some months he was discovered. He bore through life the honorable marks of the chain. By the advice of M. de Berulle, afterward Cardinal, Vincent, in 1617, left the house of the Count de Joigny, and undertook a mission at Chatillon, now in the Department of Ain. While there, the town was visited by pestilence and famine. With the clergy of the locality he was incessantly employed in procuring subsistence for the living, and comfort for the dying. Emulating their example, the ladies of Chatillon built tents, carried the sick to them, and provided food and medicine; ladies of the highest rank shared this dangerous and laborious work. On one occasion while Vincent was going into his pulpit, a lady asked him to recommend to his people a poor family, five miles from Chatillon, sick and utterly destitute. He complied with zeal and eloquence. Numbers, carrying bread, wine and provisions, visited the poor family. Vincent also went, and seeing the abundance of the supplies, said, "This is a good deed, but not well regulated. This family has too much, and some part of the supply will prove useless. What is not consumed at once will be spoiled and wasted, and the poor people will then be as badly off as before." He had the spirit of order and arrangement, and accordingly devised a scheme by which not only that particular family, but every other in the neighborhood, similarly afflicted, might be effectually relieved. Instances of

this kind occur occasionally in Toronto. Some well meaning, but inexperienced individual learns all at once that a family is at starvation point ; forthwith a notice to that effect appears in a newspaper, and then comes an avalanche of provisions—five or six roasts of beef, twelve or twenty loaves of bread and other things in proportion are contributed with reckless profusion ; but it often happens that the last state of that family is worse than the first.

In 1632 the congregation of Priests of the Mission, established by Vincent, was formally sanctioned by Rome ; these priests are generally called Lazarists, from the convent of St. Lazarus in Paris, formerly their principal house. Soon after the formation of this order, its missionaries were found in Madagascar, Ireland (where one of them, merely for exercising his priestly functions, was shot near Limerick by a Cromwellian soldier), the Islands and Highlands of Scotland, Barbary and elsewhere. Vincent lived to see 25 houses of his order in active operation in different parts of Europe. The present Archbishop of Toronto was a Lazarist, prior to his elevation to the episcopate. The best known of Vincent's foundations is, perhaps, the Sisters of Charity, whose institution has for its object to procure for the sick poor, kind and intelligent nurses. At first they numbered only five, but others soon joined their ranks. Before the revolution Paris alone contained 34 houses of this order ; it has since spread far and near ; the mother house of the United States is at Emmittsburgh, Maryland, and is now occupied by two hundred professed sisters, with their dependents. Those who have seen these sisters in France and other foreign countries must have noticed their wonderful headgear, respecting which a curious anecdote is told : The French king was sitting with Vincent near a window in Paris, when one of the sisters, bareheaded, passed along the street. " Vincent," said the King, " why not give your sisters a bonnet of some kind ?" at the same time throwing toward her a napkin which chanced to be in his hand. The napkin spread in falling, and lighted on the girl's

head, causing her to appear not unlike an animated caduceus. Such is said to be the origin of this strange looking cap. So far as is known to the writer there are no nuns of this order in Canada.

Details of Vincent's other works would require volumes ; their number almost exceeds belief ; the Hotel Dieu and Foundling Hospital at Paris ; Hospital for old men and Hospital for Galley Slaves at Marseilles may be named among the most important ; all his establishments were under excellent discipline, and abundantly furnished with everything necessary. During the war in Lorraine, when that territory was ravaged by Austrian, French, Swedish and Spanish troops, and a scene of horror presented, exceeding, if we may believe an eye-witness, the calamities which befell Jerusalem when besieged by Titus, Vincent caused to be distributed among the sufferers, as was ascertained by a calculation made soon after his death, a sum considerably exceeding £100,000 sterling, and he did the same on other similar occasions. We may well wonder that so many and so great things should have been effected by one man, destitute as Vincent was of all advantages of birth or fortune, and without any of those shining qualities which usually draw admiration and esteem. Anne of Austria, mother of Louis XIV., and Regent of France during the minority of her son, established what was called a "Council of Conscience" for the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs. This Council was composed of the famous Cardinal Mazarin, Seguier, Charton and Vincent. The latter was named president, and filled that office for ten years. Flechier, Bishop of Nismes, in one of his letters says that the high renown of the French clergy during the reign of Louis XIV. was owing to Vincent. The last years of his life were years of constant physical suffering ; nevertheless he guided the affairs of his congregation, with its many missions, and the various works of piety, of which he had always been the moving spirit. Unassisted, he conducted a large correspondence ; sent confidential agents to places where he himself could not go, maintained a strict watch over his own household, and

even when reduced to the extremity of weakness, would instruct them with a force, order and eloquence which excited the admiration of all who heard him. At length, on the 27th September, 1660, this illustrious man, worn out by age, labor and infirmities, passed to his reward; he was beatified in 1729, by Benedict XIII., and canonized in 1737, by Clement XII. During the process of the inquiries which are always made in cases of canonization, commissioners visited Chatillon, and then signified their intention to go elsewhere for further information; "that," said the people of Chatillon, "is unnecessary. Vincent did good enough among us to canonize any one man."

The society now known as that of St. Vincent de Paul is quite a modern affair; it was founded in Paris in 1833 by some young students, who, desirous of doing all the good in their power, took for Patron the great Apostle of Charity whose career we have ventured to sketch. The society celebrates this year its semi-centennial. Notwithstanding its recent origin, it is widely diffused; in fact, wherever the Church has a foothold, the society is not far distant. A special feature is the visitation of the poor at their own homes; no work of charity is foreign to its spirit. Funds are derived chiefly from the contributions of members; the returns for 1881 show a total of receipts throughout the world of nearly 10,000,000 francs; expenditure nearly as much. This may be the money value of the works of society, but we may be pardoned for hoping that it represents a portion only of their intrinsic worth. The society does not seek publicity, but at the same time has nothing to conceal. It is not unlike an underground stream, which may be traced rather by the freshness and life it produces than by the noise it makes.

TORONTO, 1883.

THE ORIGIN OF THE
SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL,
FROM THE RECOLLECTIONS OF ITS EARLY MEMBERS.

[Reprinted from *Bulletin*, March, 1882.]

The Origin of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a simple and natural one.*

During the first years following the Revolution of 1830 in France, Christian families hesitated to send their children to Paris. Of the fifty pupils who in July, 1830, were finishing their Rhetoric course in the College of St. Stanislaus, only ten returned, in October, for the Philosophy class. The school of Law had only a few Christian students. In such a condition were matters that one of them, M. de Goy, thinking himself alone in the practice of his faith, and being determined to preserve it pure, remained six months without becoming intimate with any one. One Sunday in 1832, he saw M. Ozanam and one or two of his friends, at the High Mass at St. Etienne-du-Mont, and remembered having seen them at the Law lectures. It was with a sentiment of profound joy that, on leaving the church, he accosted them on the Place St. Etienne, asking permission to press their hand, and become a friend of theirs; a request which was accepted, and the friendship heartily continued. At the school of Medicine, Christian students were still fewer.

The institutions created for Christian youth in Paris before 1830, had disappeared. The *Society of Wholesome Studies*, whose name sufficiently indicates its object, was of this number. The premises occupied by them on the Place de l'Estrapade, No. 11, a few steps from the School of Law, had, however, continued in the possession of one of its former

* This account of the early times of our Society is given at the request of the Council-General, by one of the seven founders of the Conference of Charity. It was sent to the three other survivors, who state its perfect correctness, and have added some details to it. One of the survivors, M. Devaux, has since died.

directors, M. Bailly. These premises comprised on the ground floor a reading room, a room serving as a library, and several smaller rooms, and on the upper stories, M. Bailly's apartments, with a certain number of rooms. The latter were occupied by young students, pensioners of M. Bailly, who had organized a reading room for them in the library, and different conferences for law and history in the halls of the ground floor. In order to cause a little emulation among the residents, M. Bailly admitted several young men from without to subscribe to the library, and to take part in the labors of the conferences.

The best attended among the latter was the conference called the *History Conference*, but literature and philosophy were also studied there, and Frederic Ozanam belonged to it. He came to Paris in the year 1831, to begin his law studies. He was living in the Rue des Fosses St. Victor, with M. Ampère, of the Institute, who felt quite a paternal interest in him. The energetic and enlightened faith of Ozanam had long since suggested to him the idea of a federation of studies and labors amongst young Christian men. He saw a means of realizing his project, in the History Conference, and he never lost an opportunity of bringing new members to it. It was he who induced Lallier, one of the ten philosophy pupils of St. Stanislaus during the preceding year, to enter during the year 1832. Some time afterwards Lamache was admitted. He was a native of the environs of Cherbourg, but was living in Paris since November, 1830.

The History Conference was not composed exclusively of Christian students. There were several Deists, Voltairians and Saint Simonians. Work was not of obligation. The most zealous and ardent lectured on subjects chosen by themselves. It therefore happened from time to time that the lectures gave rise, during the meeting, to rather warm discussions, especially when the Voltairians mixed in it. These struggles, sustained by Christian members of the Conferences, in defence of their common faith, soon established affectionate relations between those who had not known each other previously, and strength-

ened those already in existence between the others. From this epoch date several of those Christian friendships which are some of the greatest joys of life, and which are not destroyed by death.

However, the discussions, thus suddenly entered on, sometimes strayed away, and it was then perceived, somewhat too late, that the speakers, with the exception of the lecturer, who had studied his subject, were not sufficiently prepared to sustain, for or against. Struck with this inconvenience, and desirous of remedying it in the interest of the cause they were advocating, and for the honor of the faith that was dear to them, Ozanam and his friends conceived the idea of establishing amongst them, in the interests of the meetings of the History Conference, preparatory meetings where each person should make himself acquainted with the subject which his colleagues proposed to discuss. They could thus study them beforehand, and thus have more chance of *éclat* and success. A committee, consisting of Ozanam, Lamache and Lallier, was charged with examining this project, and the means of accomplishing it. This committee met almost immediately at the house of Lamache, Hotel Corneille, Rue Corneille. The first meeting passed in conversation, and brought about no practical result.

The next day, one of the members of the committee had occasion to chat about it with Le Taillandier, a law student of the same year, and also a member of the History Conference. Le Taillandier was living with his parents, Rue des Fleurs, near the Luxemburg. Of a calm disposition, not at all argumentative, he assiduously attended the meetings simply as a listener, without taking any part in the discussions. Whilst chatting with Lallier about the projected preparatory meetings, Le Taillandier said suddenly: "I would much prefer another kind of meeting, whence contention and controversy would be banished, and which would be composed only of Christian young men, engaged together, and solely about good works." Lallier received this project without enthusiasm. On the following day, however, he communicated it to his two

colleagues. The latter did not seem more pleased with it than he did himself, and all three continued chatting simply about the matter that occupied their attention for the time being, that is to say, the formation of meetings where the subjects to be treated on in the History Conference would be discussed.

A short time afterwards, a meeting of this Conference took place; it was more stormy than usual. The adversaries of Christianity were more aggressive; some even with acrimony and ill-will that render controversies so extremely painful to a Christian. One of them, after a pompous eulogium on Lord Byron, traced the resemblance between that sceptic and the scoffer Voltaire, and took it as his text to attack the Church, although he himself had received a Christian education. Ozanam, notwithstanding that he had taken part in the discussion with his usual superiority, was greatly saddened. On leaving the meeting he said to Lamache and a few other friends:

“How sad it is to see Catholicism, to see our holy mother the Church, thus attacked, ridiculed and calumniated. Let us of course remain in the breach to face the attacks. But do you not feel, like me, the desire, the necessity for having, outside this combative conference, another meeting consisting exclusively of Christian friends and wholly devoted to charity? Does it not seem to be time to join action to words, and to affirm by words the vitality of our faith?”

After half a century, this little scene is perfectly present to the memory of one of those (Lamache) to whom Ozanam addressed himself. He seems almost to see Ozanam's eyes, full of sadness, but at the same time full of fire and ardour; he seems to hear that voice, slightly tremulous, from the deep emotion of his soul. When the little group separated, each one carried away in his heart the burning dart which Our Lord Jesus Christ had just plunged in by the hand of the young student.

Le Taillandier's idea was then resumed, in concert with him, by the three members of the Committee.

But how was it to be realized? Where were they to meet? What was the object to be assigned to the activity and charity of the members? They resolved to take council with M. Bailly and to ask his concurrence. Ozanam took upon himself to see him. M. Bailly received the overtures made to him with the most paternal kindness. He highly approved of the project of a little brotherly intimate meeting of young men resolved to occupy themselves solely in works of charity. As to works to be undertaken, he suggested consulting the Curé of the parish of St. Etienne du Mont, M. l'Abbé Olivier, afterwards Curé of St. Roch and Bishop of Evreux. The young people went to M. Olivier and explained their intentions. He had the kindness to pass in review before them the works which appeared to him suited to their age and aptitude. He concluded by recommending, by preference, the work of the catechism for poor children.

After retiring the young men consulted together. The work of the catechism pleased them, but all did not feel themselves gifted with the vocation necessary to undertake it. It required a punctuality and care that all could not promise. They were then induced to choose a work of more general interest, within reach of all, easy of arrangement with the exigencies of the studies, and which might present sufficient variety to captivate and satisfy young minds. The work of visiting the poor at their homes possessed these characteristics. No doubt, it would be imprudent to entrust such or such a poor family indiscriminately to any visitor. But in the infinitely varied number of the poor, it is always easy to find some to whom a visit would not present any inconvenience, even for the most inexperienced young man.

They gave M. Bailly an account of the result of their interview with M. l'Abbé Olivier, of their impressions and of their resolution, which had been nearly fixed, of adopting the work of the visiting of the poor. There were only four members: that was very few. They then sought amongst

the young men frequenting the history Conference for some who would be admissible. Ozanam mentioned two, Clavé and Devaux : the former's father being head of an institution in the Faubourg de Roule in Paris, a recently converted St. Simonian ; the second, a medical student and a native of Normandy. He was immediately asked by his colleagues to invite those two young men, who were besides known to them all, to join the projected meeting. They accepted unhesitatingly.

M. Bailly proposed then to meet in the Rue du Petit-Bourbon—St. Sulpice, No. 18, in the same office as the *Catholic Tribune*, the *Gazette of the Clergy*, a paper coming out every second day and of which M. Bailly was at once the proprietor and principal editor. These premises appeared to be well suited for a small intimate meeting, not seeking publicity and still less éclat, and the members of which would desire before everything else, as the rule said later on, to learn to know themselves better and to love each other better, and, to succeed in this, to know, love and serve together the poor of Jesus Christ.

The first meeting took place in May, 1833, at eight o'clock in the evening. The members present—not one failed—were, in the order of their age :

M. Bailly (Emmanuel Joseph), born March 9th, 1793, at Bryas (Pas-de-Calais), living at No. 11 Place de l'Estrapade.

M. Lamache (Paul), born July 18th, 1810, at St Pierre Eglise (Manche), second year's law student, living in the Hotel Corneille, Rue Corneille. His father, a physician.

M. Clavé (Félix), born in Paris, a student, living with his father, the head of an institution, in the Faubourg du Roule.

M. Le Taillandier (Auguste), born January 28th, 1811, at Rouen (Seine Inférieure), a second year's law student, living with his father, a man of property, Rue des Fleurs.

M. Devaux (Jules), born July 18th, 1811, at Colombières (Calvados), a second year's medical student, living in the Hotel Ecole de Droit, Rue St. Jacques. His father, proprietor and mayor of Colombières.

M. Ozanam (Frédéric), born April 23rd, 1813, at Milan (Italy), of French parents, a second year's law student, living in the Rue des Fossés St. Victor. His father, a doctor at Lyons.

M. Lallier (François), born January 24th, 1814, at Joigny (Yonne), a second year's law student, living in the Rue St. Jacques. His father, a doctor at Joigny.

None of these young people had ever, until then, taken part in any pious association. If they had any political opinions, they were unknown to each other. With all of them the whole rule of human life was summed up in obedience to the Commandments of God and filial love for the Catholic Church, the guardian of those commandments.

The meeting, which was presided over by M. Bailly, opened with the *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*, and a short pious chapter (from the *Imitation*). They immediately resolved to adopt, as the fundamental work, the visiting of poor families at their homes. But as no one knew any poor people, or at least a sufficient number to enable each to choose whom they would wish to visit, it was arranged to ask Soeur Rosalie Rendu, of the Rue de l'Épée-de-Bois, for a list. She presided at the distribution of relief at the Committee of Benevolence of the twelfth *arrondissement* in the district of the Rue Monffetard. M. Devaux was directed to see her and ask her for this list.

It was at the same time decided that, as far as possible, the relief should not be given in money, but in kind, and by means of tickets on the various tradespeople. Whilst waiting for the meeting to get its own tickets, M. Devaux was to procure from Sœur Rosalie some of the tickets she used.

After a short conversation as to the name to be given to the association, that of *Conference* was adopted, through analogy with the name used by the other meetings to which the young people belonged. This name was besides quite inoffensive and one at which no one could take offence.

The *Conference of Charity* thus constituted, it became necessary to choose a patron. The name of Saint Vincent de

Paul was received with acclamation, as that of an essentially popular French Saint.

The Conference decided, in short, that their charity should be done at their own expense, and that each person should contribute to it in proportion to his ability, the measure of which he alone should know and of which he should be sole judge. A collection at the end of each meeting would be for this purpose. It was made, at the end of the first meeting, by M. Devaux, who was appointed treasurer. A hat served as a purse.

The meeting concluded with the recital of the prayer *Sub tuum Praesidium*. The *Veni Sancte* and the *Sub tuum* were to each of the members a classical souvenir.

At the second meeting, a week after, each member was provided with a poor family chosen by him and for him with discernment. One of the members still perfectly remembers that the family that fell to him was that of a working carpenter, consisting of the father, mother, and six or seven children, living at the corner of the Rue de l'Arbalète, near the Rue Monffetard. Socur Rosalie welcomed, with her usual kindness, the Conference messenger. The tickets furnished by her were distributed.

At the third or fourth meeting, Lallier proposed the admission of one of his companions of Stanislaus, Gustave Colas de la Noue, a law student and the son of a Councillor at the Court, in Orleans. This proposal at first gave rise to some objections. Theirs was a meeting of friends, knowing each other for a long period and accustomed to the sweetest intimacy. Might not a new comer, known only to one of the members, cause some coldness in the meeting and thus risk destroying, or at least troubling, this cherished intimacy? On the other hand, did not charity, which they had taken as their guide, oblige them to receive a young man, a brother, until then alone, and whose isolation exposed him to many dangers, and to give him the support and concurrence of friendships that might be termed ready made, since they had as their

foundation the same faith and aspirations? The latter advice prevailed, and all adopted it.

The entrance of Gustave de la Noue was quickly followed by other admissions. Among the newly admitted, we may mention Emmanuel de Condé, a law student, presented by M. Bailly; Charles Hommais, law student, another Stanislaus companion, presented by Lallier; Henri Pessonneaux,* Chauraud, law student, and Gignoux, a medical student, presented by Ozanam. At the end of the scholastic year, the Conference of Charity counted about fifteen members.

During this period of three or four months, from the beginning of May to the end of August, the collection was chiefly fed by five or six five-franc pieces which, from time to time, M. Bailly dropped into the collecting hat, at the end of the meeting. These five-franc pieces, shown by the treasurer, caused a sensation; each of the young men knew he gave nothing but a small coin. These five-franc pieces represented the value which M. Bailly was good enough to attribute to some articles, chiefly bibliographic, supplied by the majority of the members of the Conference to the *Catholic Tribune*.†

The projects of preparatory meetings for the militant Conference remained in *statu quo*. The new meeting, so full of attraction, so calm, and at the same time so vigorous, caused them to be forgotten. The members of this first Conference of St. Vincent de Paul experienced in the highest degree the *Quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum!* Their weekly meetings of piety and charity, far from being monotonous and grave, a cordial friendship animated them, and there were frequent sallies of frank youthful gaiety.

At the end of August, 1833, came the holidays. The members of the Conference separated, appointing to meet again the following November.

* When in 1853, speaking to our brothers of Florence and Leghorn, Ozanam was mentioning the number eight as being that of the first members, he included Henri Pessonneaux, his relation; but Pessonneaux always declared that he perfectly remembered being admitted immediately after Charles Hommais.

† See especially the following numbers of the *Catholic Tribune*: May 15th, June 4th, 12th, 23th, July 4th, 6th, 8th, 14th, 24th, 28th, and August 3rd, 1833.

At the re-opening of the schools of law and medicine, in November, 1833, the office of the *Catholic Tribune* was found closed. It was merged in *Univers Religieuz*, quite recently founded by M. l'Abbé Migne and M. l'Abbé de la Thuillerie. M. Bailly then placed another room at the service of the Conference of Charity, on the ground floor of No. 11 Place de l'Estrapade. Almost all the old members met again, and their number soon went up to twenty-five by the admission of several young people from Lyons, presented by Ozanam, and some pupils from the college of Juilly, amongst others, of Nedde and Lhermite.

The visiting of the poor, which was interrupted by the vacation, was resumed. The meetings, fixed for eight o'clock in the evening every Tuesday, and presided over by M. Bailly, continued for some time to be as attractive as during the preceding year. Each person, in turn, gave an account of the condition of the families he was visiting, and there were mutual, useful and cordial observations on the subject. In the first fortnight of December, 1833, Chauraud was appointed in the capacity of secretary, to form, with the president and treasurer, the board, and in future to draw up succinct minutes of the meetings.

An unexpected incident soon occurred to widen the sphere of charity. One of the officials of the bureau of benevolence of the twelfth *arrondissement* a M. Voltot, having heard of the Conference of young men associated together to go in person to succour the poor, conceived the idea of getting fellow laborers from among them, by confiding to them the official duties of commissioners of charity. Making M. Bailly acquainted with this idea, the latter communicated the proposal to the Conference, at the meeting of the 17th December. It was eagerly received, and several members, among whom were Cheruel, Labarthe, de Francheville, Antoine Serre and Chauraud, had their names put down. Ozanam and Lallier soon joined them. Ozanam took charge of poor families living in the uneven numbers, and Lallier of those

living in the even ones, from 1 to 20 in the Rue des Boulangers, in the Quarter St. Victor. They fulfilled the functions of auxiliaries of charity for the committee of benevolence for several years, from the 1st February, 1834, the date of the official nomination. Chauraud and Lallier were appointed, the one in 1835, the other in 1836, to the duties of deputy administrators in the divisions of M. Ratand and M. Scellier-Beccaria.

In the month of January, 1834, M. Bailly considered that the moment was come for calling the attention and enlisting the encouragement of the parish priest to the Conference of charity. He at first recalled to the Conference the words of St. Vincent de Paul recommending his first missionaries never to undertake anything, in the places to which they were sent, without the consent of the diocesan, and even to consider as an evil all the good that they would be tempted to do without his approbation. He added : " Our Society is too unimportant to pretend to the honor of having the parish priest assist at our meetings ; but we may delegate one of our members to go and give him an account of our works, and thus fulfill the precept of our holy patron." The secretary, Chauraud, was charged with this mission.

M. l'Abbé Faudet had succeeded M. Olivier in the parish of St. Etienne du Mont. Every Tuesday morning, Chauraud went to him after mass, making known to him the condition of the Conference works and soliciting his advice. In the evening, he acquainted his brothers with the results of the morning visit, naming the families requiring assistance, and especially instruction, recommended by the parish priest to the care of the Conference.

About the same period the members of the Conference took an active part in the measures adopted by Mgr. de Quélen, Archbishop of Paris, to obtain special religious teaching for the youth of the schools.

From the beginning of the year 1833, before the Conference was in existence, a certain number of young people, almost all

belonging to the law and history Conference of the Rue de l'Estrapade, had got up a petition for this object, and sent three of their number, Ozanam, Lejoulteux and Montazet, to present it to Mgr. de Quélen. They solicited religious instruction which, going beyond the limits which the Christian pulpit seemed to hesitate to step over, should take the adversaries of the faith to task, by following them into their own ground, and should reply to the objections and daily attacks of the press, the public platform, books, and even public lectures. Mgr. de Quélen received the three young messengers with his usual urbanity, but not being able to realize their wishes at once, promised to try and find the means of doing so the following year.

In the beginning of the year 1834, a fresh petition was therefore drawn up, and the young men of the schools met in much larger numbers than the first time, and again appointed three of their number to be their interpreters. The choice fell on three of the oldest members of the Conference: Ozanam, Lamache and Lallier. To the request for an audience with Mgr. de Quélen, he replied by the following note: "M. the Archbishop of Paris has the honor to inform M. Lallier and his two friends that he will receive them to-day, January 13th, in the forenoon, at the house of the Ladies of St. Michel, 193 Rue St. Jacques. Paris, January 13th, 1834." This note, written by the Abbé Surat, the Archbishop's secretary, was sent to Lallier, not that the latter had any superiority in the deputation, of which he was the youngest member, but simply because he lived at 185 Rue St. Jacques, a few steps from the house of the Ladies of St. Michel, with whom Mgr. de Quélen had found an asylum in 1831, after the Archbishop's palace was sacked. The real head of the deputation was Frédéric Ozanam.

The audience took place on the day appointed in Mgr. de Quélen's salon. His Grace was good enough to explain to the three young people the measures taken to forward their desire and that of their comrades. Several preachers, picked men,

were in turn to preach on the Sundays of Lent, at Notre Dame, and on subjects calculated to captivate the attention of their youthful hearers.

The three sent had been charged by their friends with requesting that the special instruction, the object of the petition, might be entrusted to the Abbé Lacordaire, whose warm and combative language they liked ; or to the Abbé Bautain, whose good sense and sound philosophical deductions they appreciated. Both, although under different aspects, appeared to them calculated to succeed with youth, whose entire sympathies they had. They therefore testified a desire to have one of these orators, frankly and with the most respectful deference expressing the fear that a series of preachers, each giving a sermon on a different subject, might not produce the results hoped to be attained by an unique and well arranged instruction.

Whilst the conversation was taking its course on this delicate ground, the salon door opened, and M. de la Mennais was announced. Mgr. de Quélen immediately rose, hastened to meet him, and taking his hand, turned towards the young men : " Here, gentlemen," said he, " is the man who would suit you. If his strength and voice would permit him to be heard, the doors of the cathedral should be thrown wide open, and it would not be large enough to contain the immense crowd." " Ah ! is it I, Monsieur," replied M. de la Mennais ; " my career is over." The three young men had risen on the entrance of the new visitor ; they took leave of the Archbishop, and retired.

The next day, a newspaper published, at the head of its columns, a short account of the reception of the three young men, with the incident relative to the Abbé de la Mennais. Annoyed at this indiscretion, Ozanam and Lallier, after having conferred with Lamache, who could not join them, went at ten o'clock in the morning to Mgr. de Quélen, who received them in his ante-chamber. They hastened to express their regret at the ill-timed publicity given by a newspaper to the

conversation of the day before. Mgr. de Quélen sent for the paper, which he had not as yet read, and, after having run through the article: "These journalists," said he, "never do anything else." And as the two young men were repeating their excuses, he approached, reassuring them, put an arm around the neck of each, drew them towards him, and paternally embracing them, "The preachers whom I intend for you," he added, "are in my salon. I am about to present you to them, and whilst I breakfast, you can explain your wishes to them."

Thus introduced into the salon, the two friends found themselves in presence of the orators appointed to preach during the following Lent at Notre Dame. The introduction given, his Grace retired, and conversation commenced between the young people, who sought to explain as well as they could the kind of instruction they wished for, and the preachers, who tried their best to respond to their views. They liked each other very quickly, and whilst the calmest were chatting near the fireplace, M. l'Abbé Thibaut, afterwards Bishop of Montpellier, was warmly discussing the matter, walking round the salon with Ozanam. Just at the moment that they were at the end of the room opposite the door, speaking loudly, the Archbishop entered. M. l'Abbé Thibaut, stretching out both arms towards his Grace, cried out—"Monsieur, Monsieur, the gentlemen and we understand each other perfectly." "If you do not understand each other well," replied the Archbishop, smiling, "you can be well heard at all events." The young men retired, after having thanked his Grace for his extreme kindness.

Returning to the house of one of them, and convinced that the measures adopted would not have the desired success with regard to youth, they drew up, still holding the meeting, a memorial to the Archbishop of Paris. Ozanam was full of his subject, ideas crowded upon him and rushed from his lips as from a spring. The two friends wrote, and in a kind of reciprocal dictation, by a rapid and animated exchange of

thoughts and expressions, in which Ozanam almost always had the initiative, they endeavored to formulate, in clear and precise terms, each of the questions that they thought important to be treated on, and which, almost all, related to the social rôle of the Church. A fair copy of this memorial, or rather programme, was then drawn up and immediately sent to Mgr. de Quélen. It is not known what became of this.

The *Univers* of the 8th February published the order for the Conferences of Notre Dame. They were given during the Lent of 1834, to an immense crowd of men of every age and rank, by the seven preachers appointed. At the same time, but at different hours, the Abbé Lacordaire gave his first Conferences in the chapel of the Stanislaus College. They were frequented by young people especially. They concluded with an appeal to the charity of the audience, in favor of a poor artist, who was a cripple at thirty years of age and visited by the young painter Janmot, in his character of member of the Conference of St. Vincent de Paul.

The Conference of charity felt the effect of the activity and ardor of the youth who thus flocked to the foot of the Christian pulpits. At their first meeting in May, 1833, the members were placed under the patronage of Saint Vincent de Paul. On the 4th February, 1834, at the suggestion of Leprevost, they placed themselves still more specially under the protection of that great Saint, by adding to the prayer *Veni Sancte* the invocation *Sancte Vincenti a Paulo, ora pro nobis*, and by resolving to celebrate in future his feast of the 19th July every year. At the same meeting, Ozanam requested that the Society might be placed under the protection of the Most Blessed Virgin also, by choosing one of her feasts to honor her in a special manner. Lhermite proposed the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The two suggestions were unanimously adopted and the *Ave Maria* added to the prayers for the meeting. After the Lent of 1834, the number of members was more than doubled. A touching ceremony

took place which gave a fresh goad to their enthusiasm. On Sunday, April 13th, 1834, the anniversary of the translation of the relics of St. Vincent de Paul was to be celebrated in the chapel of the Lazarists, Rue de Sévres. A new silver reliquary, richly ornamented, had been prepared to receive the body of the Saint. These venerable remains, piously preserved for nearly two centuries, after the Revolution of 1789, had been taken out of their reliquary in order to conceal them from profanation. The reliquary only had been destroyed. The remains were placed for the time in a room or sacristy contiguous to the chapel of the Lazarists, behind the altar. M. Bailly, President of the Conference, obtained permission for them to visit, on the eve of the ceremony, the relics of the Saint whom they had chosen as their patron. Delighted at this favor, about sixty of the members went to the Lazarist's chapel on the morning of the 12th of April. After having heard Mass, they went into the next room, where the body was clothed in its sacerdotal vestments. It was quite easy to see the features and profile of the face, beneath the veil that covered them. All present knelt and prayed with great recollection. Then each person advanced in turn to kiss the feet of him who, like his Divine Master, had gone about doing good on the earth. In presence of these holy relics, the thoughts of the young associates ascended without difficulty to the invisible world, whence the glorious soul of their Patron Saint could see and bless them.

On the 6th May, 1834, at the request of Soeur Rosalie, several members were appointed to go and teach spelling to three young workmen, in a house in the Rue de Vaugirard.

On the 27th of the following May, the members of the Conference made it a point to join the procession of *Corpus Christi*, in the town of Nanterre. The parish priest, being informed of their intention, was good enough to approve of it, and to express his gratitude at this act of public edification. It was renewed the following years of 1835 and 1836, at Nanterre and Batignolles.

The success of these little associations naturally made the members anxious to extend them, and multiply their fruits. They felt themselves, no doubt in a very humble manner, useful to the poor, and, above all, useful to themselves. Faith, piety, every good and pure affection of the human heart found food in these Christian relations amongst young men, who could give free scope to all the enthusiasm of their age, under the guidance of a man essentially good, calm and prudent. They therefore felt the necessity of widening the sphere of their action, and from time to time this became apparent from the conversation of several of them. Thus, on Holy Thursday, March 27, 1834, La Taillandier and Lallier agreed to meet at Ozanam's, to discuss a project of a grand association of good works, which would comprise the provinces as well as Paris. But the unexpected arrival of other visitors prevented the three friends from examining the subject thoroughly.

On the other hand, the Conference meetings, which had become large, no longer presented the charm of the early intimacy. The long distribution of the tickets, more rarely accompanied with details of the families visited, was losing much of its interest. They willingly allowed themselves the pleasure of a private chat with those sitting near them. The meeting of the 24th of April, 1834, had certainly made those inconveniences more manifest, for, on leaving the Conference, at nearly ten o'clock in the evening, Ozanam, Devaux and Lallier consulted together for more than an hour, walking on the Place du Panthéon. For the first time they asked each other if it would not be desirable to divide the Conference into sections, in each of which they would know each other better, and when it would be possible to have again the charm and intimacy of earlier times.

The solution to that question was not given until the following year. It was debated more than once, without, however, the project of extending the Society to the provinces being lost sight of. On the 10th of June, 1834, Ozanam presented to the Conference a former companion who was

visiting Paris, M. Carnier of Nimes, who had expressed a wish to attend one of the meetings. This meeting was of ordinary interest. There was nothing unusual except the giving in of a sum of thirty-five francs by a brother, a pupil of M. Ingres. It was the result of a special collection in the master's workshop, for the poor of the Conference. The meeting over, M. Carnier thanked the members for their brotherly reception, saying that he had resolved to establish at Nimes a meeting of young men, exactly similar to that which he had just witnessed. In the beginning of the year 1835 he realized his project.

On the 19th of June, 1834, in consequence of a kind of official communication from M. Bailly, M. l'Abbé Faudet, who for several months had been kept current with the works of the Society, consented to come to one of the meetings, which, for his convenience, was fixed for Friday, June 27, instead of Tuesday, the usual day. The meeting went off as usual, with the addition of a report read by M. de Lanoue, on the works of the Conference since the beginning of the scholastic year. He stated, amongst other things, that the expenditure, the chief part of which consisted of the distribution of tickets to the poor, amounted to 1,401 francs. When M. l'Abbé Faudet came to the meeting, his countenance, which was habitually serious, almost severe, seemed full of care. It soon brightened in the presence of the frank, simple attractions of this assemblage of young men, and it was with real cordiality that M. Faudet wound up the meeting with a few words of paternal encouragement. The general satisfaction proved itself by the collection, which was fifty francs.

At that time there was a house of correction for young prisoners in the Rue des Grés, in the vicinity of the schools. The majority of those children were devoid of religion and good principle, and were almost completely abandoned to themselves, especially with regard to religion. One of the members, Leprevost, conceived the idea of giving the first elements of Christian instruction, in the hope of forming in them an upright intelligence and will on this basis. He

mooted this to his brothers, several of whom offered to second him. But to penetrate into the house it would be necessary to obtain the authority of the president of the civil tribunal, who at that time was a M. de Belleyme, and none of the young members had any means of approaching him. After some time they discovered some one who knew a friend of M. de Belleyme. Negotiations were entered into by means of this medium. M. de Belleyme received the overtures with great kindness, and, at the end of the month of July, 1834, granted the desired permission.

The work of the instruction of the young prisoners was immediately tried. Le Prevost, Ozanam, Lamache and Le Taillandier devoted themselves especially to it.

With the majority of these poor children, Lamache says in his report of 1842, they found the most utter ignorance of the elementary ideas of religion, and others were already advanced in impiety; they saw there those prodigies that Paris boasts of, Atheists of fifteen years of age, who are wonderfully conversant with their philosophy, and answered a question from the Catechism with a jest from Voltaire. Despite the little consolation offered to the members of the Conference, who went every week and shut themselves up for hours in this moral lazaret, they continued their lessons for more than two years, until the young prisoners were transferred from the Rue des Grés to the prison of the Madelonnettes, at the other extremity of Paris.

The work of the young prisoners was replaced later on, at the beginning of 1836, by the work of the orphan apprentices of St. Vincent de Paul.

The vacation of 1834 did not interrupt the visiting of the poor. From this time forward, several of the members were living in Paris and did not leave it, and amongst them was Le Prevost, a little older than his brothers, and of uncertain health, but with whom zeal made up for want of strength.

At the end of the scholastic year, the absent had only to resume their place at the common fireside. The meetings

had not been discontinued. They brought back numerous friends from the provinces. Ozanam had written on the 15th October, 1834, "We shall bring you a band of good Lyonese to Paris, who will swell all our meetings, though, truth to say, I no longer hold to the History Conference but as a means of recruiting the Conference of Charity." He kept his word, and from November to December, 1834, the number of members quickly exceeded a hundred.

The inconveniences which had already been felt by several members, at the time of the first increase, then became so sensible, that it was necessary to resume the project of dividing the Conference into several sections. Brought before the meeting of December the 16th at the suggestion of Ozanam, many opposed it. The principal objection was the impossibility of having M. Bailly to preside at the different sections. He had received the growing Society into his house, had guided it, lavishing his advice on its first efforts. They were accustomed to his direction, his presidency seemed indispensable, and they feared that the sections that would be deprived of it might languish and be dissolved. These objections prevented any resolution being adopted.

Fifteen days afterwards, on the 30th December, Arthaud renewed the proposal to divide themselves into sections. A committee was formed to examine into it. On the next day, 31st of December, the committee met, and such was the interest that attached to the question, that several members, although not belonging to this committee, went there, and even took part in the discussion. It was a warm one. The project of division, sustained by Ozanam, was combated earnestly by Brac de la Perrière. Le Taillandier feared above all the great blow that would be given to the friendly relations established between the members, by a separation: he could not restrain his tears at the idea of it. The meeting continued; opposition of the different views and general emotion were only increasing, when the clock struck midnight. At the sound of the New-Year, M. Bailly, very much moved himself, rose and said:

“For some time past, this uncertainty and these dissensions have shaken my health very much ; I feel unable to continue them. A new year is beginning : let us embrace each other, and leave to me the care of making suitable arrangements to give satisfaction to all.” At these simple words, all the members rose and embraced each other cordially, with reciprocal wishes for happiness.

On the following Tuesday, January 6th, 1835, two new committees were appointed by M. Bailly. One consisted of the partizans of the division, and the other of its adversaries. They held several meetings, especially on the 27th of January, in which both concluded to form two sections, both of which should be held in M. Bailly's house. Each section should have its special meeting, devoted to the distribution of tickets ; then the members of both sections would hold a general meeting to vote extraordinary relief, and to deliberate on the admission of new candidates, and for the collections. They hoped in this way to do away with the painfulness of separation.

Following this idea, M. Bailly announced at the meeting of the 24th of February, the division of the Conference into two sections, who would meet the following week in two different rooms. One of these sections would be formed of the members who visited the poor in the twelfth *arrondissement*, and in the city ; the other, of the members who visited the poor of the thirteenth and first *arrondissements*. The poor of the first *arrondissement* were then confided to the brothers who lived in the district of St. Phillippe du Roule, among whom was Clavé, who, despite the distance, went every week to the Conference, Rue de l'Estrapade.

M. Bailly, continuing as president of the Society, appointed Ozanam vice-president of the first section, and Brac de la Perrière secretary. Levassor was vice president of the second section, at least the minutes say so,* and de Thury was

* Levassor never appears to have fulfilled those functions, in consequence of his departure from Paris.

secretary. Picard was appointed treasurer of the first section and Leprevost of the second.

At the meeting of the previous 10th of February, Ozanam had announced from a letter of M. Carnier, the creation of a Conference at Nimes, about which he had promised to interest himself. This news confirmed the resolution formed by M. Bailly of developing the Society, as circumstances seemed to require.

One of the first measures adopted by the sections when they met, was the printing of tickets for the poor, bearing the name of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. These tickets were henceforth to replace those given before by the Sisters of Charity.

On the 7th of April following, Lallier was in his turn nominated to replace Ozanam in the vice-presidency of the first section, which had taken the name of "Section of the Faubourg St. Jacques." At the same time, Leprevost replaced Levassor in the second section, called of the Faubourg St. Germain.

Their second section, when the meeting was over, rejoined the former in the lecture-room. The inconveniences of this method were quickly felt. Sometimes the first section had finished its distribution of tickets before the second, and they did not know what to do until it was time for the two sections to meet. Sometimes, on the contrary, the second section had been quicker, and its unexpected arrival disturbed the members of the first. Thus, on Tuesday, the 12th of May, the arrival of the president, at the head of his people, in the lecture-room where the section St. Jacques held their meetings, caused a confusion which it was difficult to put a stop to.

On the other hand, the number of members was increasing, and often the double meeting which resulted from the arrangements made, was prolonged very far into the evening. The latter inconvenience was particularly felt by members belonging to distant districts. Thus Clavé and such of his friends who lived in the Faubourg du Roule, very soon

expressed a wish to form a separate section. This was too natural and too legitimate not to be well received.

The first meeting of this new section was held on Monday, the 25th May, 1835, in Clavé's house, 20 Rue du Faubourg du Roule, and was presided over by M. Catruffo. Ozanam and Lallier assisted it. One of the most recently admitted members of the new Conference, was very anxious that the whole Conference should enter the Living Rosary, considering as he said, the Living Rosary as the only foundation of a society of charity. The older brothers observed that it was better to leave the adoption of pious practices optional with the members, and not to impose any, if we did not wish to render the recruiting of members difficult, if not impossible.

From the Faubourg du Roule to the Panthéon is a long way. The members of the new section re-conducted their former companions as far as the Rue Royale. The latter renewed their visit on the 29th June following.

On the 30th June, another member solicited the establishment of a fourth section in the parish of Bonne Neuville, very far also from the Place de l'Estrapade. He, at the same time, presented three candidates, living like himself in that parish, and who would help to form the nucleus of a new section. His request was well received, and, in order to prevent delay, the admission of the three candidates took place at the meeting then being held.

On the 16th of the previous June, Le Taillandier had succeeded Lallier as President of the St. Jacques section ; and Maubout had replaced Leprevost in the St. Germain section.

On the 19th July, 1835, all the sections of the Society met in the chapel of the Lazarists, to celebrate the feast of their patron saint. A great number of members went to Holy Communion at the nine o'clock High Mass. They went again to vespers at half-past two. The general meeting was held at eight o'clock in the evening, in their usual hall.

It was during the year 1835, that they began forming a library and clothing depot for the poor.

The vacation was approaching, and, as in other years, would necessarily recall the majority of the young members to their families. But, in each section a sufficient number of members would remain to do the visiting of the poor uninterruptedly. M. Bailly, President General, was able, at the meeting of September 29th, that is to say, in the height of the holidays, to give an account of the staff and works of the two sections of St. Phillippe du Roule and Bonne Neuville, to the united sections of St. Jacques and St. Germain.

At the same time that it was thus becoming strengthened and extended, the Society was beginning to be known, although its rule was not to seek publicity.

At the meeting of the 10th February, 1835, it had received, besides a new visit from M. Le Curé of St. Etienne du Mont, that of M. Pissin-Sicard, the adopted son of M. l'Abbé Sicard, and director of a deaf and dumb institution in Belgium.

On the following Tuesday, March 30th, M. de Rainneville came to ask addresses of heads of workshops, where it would be possible to place in perfect security apprentices or workmen coming from the country.

On the 15th of April, the brothers who were directing the Christian School of the Rue St. Martin wanted willing young men to aid them at the evening adult classes. Le Taillandier and Esteve offered themselves for this mission.

On the 28th May, the same brothers made another request. This time they wanted short addresses after the music class on Sunday evening.

On the 16th June, a sum of 250 francs was given to the Society for the poor. It consisted of 20 francs sent by M. l'Abbé Augé, director of the Stanislaus College; 30 francs, the product of a collection made at a meeting of young men; and 200 francs sent by the pupils of the College of Juilly.

Towards the end of the year 1835, the number of members, admitted since the beginning, reached the figure of two hundred and fifty. The moment seemed opportune for a regular organi-

zation. When the holidays were over, all members met again in Paris, and M. Bailly resolved to give a regular written rule to the Society of Charity. He charged Lalier to draw it up, reserving to himself the writing of the preliminary reflections.

He, at the same time, endeavoured to obtain special room in the faubourg St. Germain, where the section of the same name might henceforth meet, and form, with the Conferences of St. Phillippe du Roule and Boune-Neuville and the section St. Jacques, four branches of the same stock, entirely distinct. This room was kindly given, in the house occupied by the Society of St. Francis Regis, Rue Cassette, at the corner of the Rue de Vaugirard, by M. Gossin, its President, to whom the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, of which, later on, he was to become President General, was at that time unknown. He admitted the section Saint Germain, only on the condition that it would be presided over by Chauraud, who was personally known to him, as a member of the Society of St. Francis Regis.

On the 8th December, 1835, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, and one of those celebrated by the Society, M. Bailly placed the rule before the general meeting, it being preceded by the reading of the preliminary considerations drawn up by himself. These considerations, which were taken almost verbatim from the writings of Saint Vincent de Paul, were so perfectly adapted to the ideas and views of all the members, that they were adopted with the fullest and most perfect sympathy.

After the reading of the rule, M. Bailly, taking henceforth the title of President-General of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, appointed Leprevost as Vice-President-General, Brac de la Perrière as Secretary-General, and Devaux as Treasurer-General. These four members formed the Council of direction of the Society.

The section Saint Germain, taking the name of Conference of Saint Sulpice, had Chauraud for President, Le Taillandier as Secretary, and Delalice as Treasurer.

Ozanam was then named President of the section Saint Jacques, which took the name of Conference of St. Etienne du Mont, with Renard as Secretary, and Picard as Treasurer.

The first act of the Conference Saint Sulpice was to fix seven o'clock on Tuesdays for the meetings, in order that the members, if they wished, might have time to go to the Conference of Saint Etienne du Mont, and to remain a few minutes with their brothers.

Thus constituted, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul got over the year 1836. The first General Meeting of the four Conferences took place on the first Sunday of Lent. During the holidays, a certain number of young people from Lyons, whose studies in Paris were finished, founded in Lyons, on the 16th August, 1836, the first provincial conference after Nimes. This latter had suffered a passing eclipse, but it was reviving. The members of the Conference of Lyons reserved for Ozanam, who was still absent, the presidency of their meeting. In the beginning of 1837, as the correspondence inserted in the Manual of the Society testifies, continued and periodical communication was established between the Conferences of Paris and those of Lyons, Nimes, Rennes, and Nantes, where other young brothers had just established new centres, and the gradual development of the Society began with the calm and prudent regularity which is the characteristic of Christian works. The development of the life and works of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is, from this period, too well remembered and stated in too many documents, to require repetition here. We shall simply thank God for having blessed the movement of Christian piety that caused our first members to assemble, and for having afterwards given their successors the grace of continuing faithful to their programme.

“To learn to know, and love each other.

“To learn to know, serve and love the poor of Jesus Christ.”

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